

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE.

In re Patent Application of

H. WATANABE et al

Serial No. 10/721,088

Group Art Unit: 2188

Filed: November 26, 2003

Examiner: K. L. Ellis

For: STORAGE SYSTEM

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT (IDS)
UNDER § 1.97 AND § 1.98

Commissioner for Patents
Mail Stop DD
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

March 9, 2004

Sir:

1. This IDS should be considered:

(a) when filed within three months of the filing date of the present application, or within three months of the filing date of the National Stage as set forth in § 1.491 in an international application, or before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits, whichever occurs last;

(b) when filed before the mailing date of either a Final Rejection under § 1.113 or a Notice of Allowance under § 1.311, whichever occurs first and when 1(a) does not apply. For this purpose, there is included herein either a certification in section 4 below (included when indicated by a marked box), or a fee of \$180.00 (a Credit Card Payment Form in the amount of \$180.00 is enclosed, or if not see section 5 below);

(c) when filed prior to the payment of the Issue Fee, when 1(a)-(b) do not apply, and when a certification is included in section 4 below (included when indicated by a marked box); then the Applicant(s) hereby petition(s) and request(s) consideration of this IDS, and provided herewith is a fee of \$180.00 (a Credit Card Payment Form in the amount of

\$180.00 to cover the petition fee, or if not see section 5 below).

2. When 1(a)-(c) do not apply, then it is requested that this IDS be placed in the file.

3. Listing of the information submitted is on the attached Form PTO-1449, which forms a part of this IDS. A copy of each listed document is enclosed when needed (needed for U.S. and foreign patents, publication or portion thereof listed; no copy of a U.S. patent application is needed; a copy of a document is not needed when previously submitted or previously cited by the PTO in a parent application of the present application as set forth under 35 U.S.C. § 120).

4. The undersigned hereby states:

☒ (a) that each item of information contained in this IDS was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, which communication was dated not more than three months prior to the filing of this IDS; or

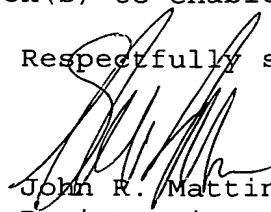
(b) that no item of information contained in this IDS was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application or, to the knowledge of the undersigned after making reasonable inquiry, was known to any individual designated in § 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of this IDS.

5. If a fee or additional fee is required, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee or additional fee that may be required and credit any excess to Deposit Account No. 50-1417. A duplicate of this sheet is attached.

6. No explanation of relevancy is being provided for the following document(s) because each is either in the English language, discussed in the present Specification, or its relevance is as stated in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application.

7. If the PTO determines that part(s) of the required content is inadvertently omitted, then it is requested that the Applicant(s) be given additional time and specific identification of such omission(s) to enable full compliance.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: March 9, 2004

FORM PTO-1449
(REV. 7-80)U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICEATTY. DOCKET NO.
ASA-817-02SERIAL NO.
10/721,088**LIST OF DOCUMENTS CITED BY APPLICANT**
(Use several sheets if necessary)APPLICANT
H. Watanabe et alFILING DATE
11/26/03GROUP
2188**U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**

| EXAMINER INITIAL | DOCUMENT | DATE | NAME | CLASS | SUBCLASS | FILING DATE (If Appropriate) |
|---------------------|-----------|----------|---------------|-------|----------|---------------------------------|
| AA | 5,905,995 | 05/18/99 | Tabuchi et al | | | |
| AB | | | | | | |
| AC | | | | | | |
| AD | | | | | | |
| AE | | | | | | |
| AF | | | | | | |
| AG | | | | | | |
| AH | | | | | | |
| AI | | | | | | |
| AJ | | | | | | |
| AK | | | | | | |

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

| | DOCUMENT | DATE | COUNTRY | CLASS | SUBCLASS | TRANSLATION | |
|----|-----------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | | | | | | YES | NO |
| AL | 03-093942 | 09/25/91 | Japan | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| AM | 09-069031 | 11/03/97 | Japan (with English abstract) | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| AN | 07-234811 | 05/09/95 | Japan (with English abstract) | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| AO | 06-067809 | 11/03/94 | Japan (with English abstract) | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| AP | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

OTHER DOCUMENTS (Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, etc.)

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| AR | | |
| AS | | |
| AT | | |

EXAMINER

DATE CONSIDERED

* EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.